

Ghosts of war: China's relations with Portugal in the post-war period, 1945–9*

Helena F. S. Lopes 

University of Bristol, United Kingdom

Abstract

This article investigates the ways in which the legacies of the Second World War shaped Sino-Portuguese relations during the final years of Nationalist rule in mainland China. It argues that Portugal's wartime neutrality exacerbated the ambiguities of its centuries-old presence in China and that these ambiguities were decisive in shaping political and diplomatic manoeuvring in the post-war period. As a victorious power China sought to affirm its sovereignty when dealing with Portugal on issues such as the handling of Japanese property, the extradition of suspects of war crimes and collaboration, and the abolition of extraterritoriality. Disagreements over these reflected both countries' attempts to assert sovereignty through the ability to serve justice.

This article investigates the ways in which the legacies of the Second World War shaped Sino-Portuguese relations during the final years of Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, K.M.T.) rule in mainland China. While there has been a vibrant historiographical interest in the conflict in East Asia and its immediate aftermath,¹ studies on the international history of the war and the post-war period in the region have largely centred on the role of the major belligerents (the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, China, Britain and, to a lesser extent, France, Germany and Italy).² However, as comparative studies

* I would like to thank Rana Mitter and other participants of the 2019 U.K. China Humanities Alliance Conference on China and Global History, 'Chinese history, the postwar, and global order' at the University of Oxford for their helpful comments, as well as Robert Bickers and the two anonymous reviewers for their feedback and suggestions. Research for this paper began as part of a doctoral project at Oxford funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology and by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and the final version was completed during a Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship. Archival research in Taipei was undertaken during a Taiwan Fellowship.

¹ See, e.g., R. Mitter, *China's War With Japan, 1937–1945: the Struggle for Survival* (London, 2013); H. van de Ven, *China at War: Triumph and Tragedy in the Emergence of the New China, 1937–1952* (London, 2017); *The Dismantling of Japan's Empire in East Asia: Deimperialization, Postwar Legitimation and Imperial Afterlife*, ed. B. Kushner and S. Muminov (London, 2017); and *Overcoming Empire in Post-Imperial East Asia: Repatriation, Redress and Rebuilding*, ed. B. Kushner and S. Muminov (London, 2019).

² See, e.g., *Negotiating China's Destiny in World War II*, ed. H. van de Ven, D. Lary and S. R. MacKinnon (Stanford, Calif., 2015); J. W. Garver, *Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1937–1945: the Diplomacy of Chinese Nationalism* (New York, 1988); O. A. Westad, *Cold War and Revolution: Soviet-American Rivalry and the Origins of the Chinese Civil War, 1944–1946* (New York, 1993); J. H. Boyle, *China and Japan at War, 1937–1945: the Politics of Collaboration* (Stanford, Calif., 1972); A. Shai, *Origins of the War in the East: Britain, China and Japan 1937–39* (London, 1976); F. Mercier, *Vichy Face à Chiang Kai-shek: Histoire Diplomatique [Vichy and Chiang Kai-shek: Diplomatic History]* (Paris, 1995); N. F. Glang, 'Germany and Chongqing: secret communication during WWII', *Intelligence and National Security*, xxx (2015), 871–89; and G. Samarani, 'The evolution of Fascist Italian diplomacy during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1943', in *China in the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–1945: Politics, Culture, and Society*, ed. D. P. Barrett and L. N. Shyu (New York, 2001), pp. 65–87.

of decolonization have demonstrated,³ considering small colonial powers can reveal important overlooked connections and reframe our understanding of the practices and limitations of larger players. Building on recent scholarship that has reassessed the importance of Nationalist China in post-war international politics⁴ and the fates of imperialism in East Asia, this article analyses the opportunities and difficulties that arose in China's diplomacy with Portugal in the late 1940s. Portugal's wartime neutrality exacerbated the ambiguities of its old presence in China. Those ambiguities provided considerable room for political and diplomatic manoeuvring in the immediate post-war period, as both the Chinese Nationalists and the Portuguese Estado Novo regime sought to assert sovereignty in a new, uncertain world order.

Ruled by an authoritarian government since the late 1920s, Portugal was one of the few European countries to remain neutral during the Second World War. That neutrality was far from straightforward. There were periods of greater proximity to the Axis – with whom the dictatorship of António de Oliveira Salazar had a number of affinities – followed by a pro-Allied shift in 1943, framed in the context of the country's historical alliance with Great Britain. This late pro-Allied move greatly contributed to the survival of Salazar's regime. Unlike the defeated fascist regimes in Europe, but similar to Spain, Portugal's Estado Novo was allowed to remain as a most undemocratic part of the 'West', as well as the only colonial power not to experience a significant wave of decolonization in the post-war period. The ambiguities of Portugal's neutrality in the Euro-American context of the war have been meticulously probed by historians,⁵ but its iterations in East Asia remain comparatively understudied.

In fact, Portugal's neutrality had important effects in China.⁶ The southern enclave of Macau, a Portuguese settlement since the sixteenth century, remained the only foreign-ruled territory in China not to be occupied by Japan. Portuguese sovereignty there had never been unequivocally accepted by successive Chinese regimes, and the extent of Portugal's ability to shape everyday life in the enclave had varied substantially over time. The ambiguities of the Portuguese presence in China, including what Cathryn Clayton calls 'sort-of-sovereignties' in her seminal study on Macau,⁷ were significantly exacerbated in the 1930s and 1940s. Portugal never broke off relations with China's ruling Nationalist government, whose leader, Chiang Kai-shek, led the country's resistance against Japan.⁸ Unlike most other non-Axis countries, Portugal did not relocate its diplomats to the Chinese wartime capital of Chongqing in the south-western hinterland. When Japan

³ See, e.g., *The Ends of European Colonial Empires: Cases and Comparisons*, ed. M. B. Jerónimo and A. C. Pinto (Basingstoke, 2015).

⁴ See, e.g., R. Mitter, 'State-building after disaster: Jiang Tingfu and the reconstruction of post-World War II China, 1943–1949', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, lxi (2019), 176–206; and R. Mitter, 'Imperialism, transnationalism, and the reconstruction of post-war China: UNRRA in China, 1944–7', *Past & Present*, ccxviii (2013), 51–69.

⁵ See, e.g., A. J. Telo, *Portugal na Segunda Guerra* [Portugal in the Second World War] (Lisbon, 1987); A. J. Telo, *Portugal na Segunda Guerra: 1941–1945* [Portugal in the Second World War: 1941–5] (Lisbon, 1991); F. Rosas, 'Portuguese neutrality in the Second World War', in *European Neutrals and Non-Belligerents During the Second World War*, ed. N. Wylie (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 268–82; I. F. Pimentel, *Espiões em Portugal durante a II Guerra Mundial* [Spies in Portugal During the Second World War] (Lisbon, 2013); and C. Ninhos, *Portugal e os Nazis: Histórias e Segredos de uma Aliança* [Portugal and the Nazis: Histories and Secrets of an Alliance] (Lisbon, 2017).

⁶ H. F. S. Lopes, 'Questioning neutrality: Sino-Portuguese relations during the war and the post-war periods, 1937–1949' (unpublished University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 2018).

⁷ C. H. Clayton, *Sovereignty at the Edge: Macau and the Question of Chineseness* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009), pp. 33–58.

⁸ The K.M.T. had a complex relationship with its main domestic rival, the Chinese Communist Party, with which it formed a Second United Front in 1936 in order to resist Japan.

occupied most urban centres in coastal China in 1937–8, all of Portugal's consuls and its highest-ranking diplomat remained in occupied cities. The Portuguese minister to China stayed in Shanghai, where he mingled in Axis circles and interacted with Chinese collaborationist authorities. In Macau, surrounded by occupied lands and seas from 1938–40, engagement with Japanese military and diplomatic figures and representatives of the Reorganized National Government (R.N.G.) was a frequent necessity. The R.N.G., established in 1940 by a prominent Nationalist politician and long-time Chiang rival, Wang Jingwei, was the most important collaborationist government in wartime China and, among other areas, controlled part of Guangdong province, which bordered Macau. Described by Philip Snow as an 'East Asian Casablanca',⁹ Macau was a centre of shadow diplomacy, intelligence gathering and smuggling. Its neutrality was useful to all belligerents in the region.¹⁰ It was also a haven to thousands of refugees fleeing the Japanese occupation in China and, from 1942 onwards, those leaving occupied Hong Kong. During the war the number of people in Macau – a territory comprising a peninsula and two islands with a combined area of around 15 km² – rose almost threefold, reaching half a million.¹¹ The massive influx of refugees was central to Portuguese arguments against accusations of collaboration with Japan and the R.N.G. that arose during and after the war. Concessions made to their demands (for example, for vessels or materials) were justified with the need to ensure food supplies.

Existing publications in Chinese, English and Portuguese tend to centre on the local impact of the conflict on Macau's society and economy.¹² When foreign relations are considered, it is engagements with Japan that are emphasized and little is said on Sino-Portuguese relations during the conflict, though arguably this was the most important bilateral relationship concerning Macau. The post-war period has been analysed mostly as a prelude to in-depth studies on (unofficial) relations between Mao's China and Portugal.¹³

This article aims to shed new light on the complex post-war diplomacy between the Republic of China (R.O.C.) and Portugal and the ways in which the Nationalists sought to reassert Chinese sovereignty over Macau. The (ab)uses of neutrality during the war were central to post-war Sino-Portuguese relations. This work explores a series of issues left by the conflict: the re-establishment of regular diplomatic contacts, the handling of Japanese property, the extradition of suspects of war crimes and collaboration, the abolition of extraterritoriality, and discourses criticizing Portugal's problematic neutrality in calls to retake Macau. These interconnected issues raised complicated sets of questions

⁹ P. Snow, *The Fall of Hong Kong: Britain, China and the Japanese Occupation* (Hong Kong, 2003), p. 180.

¹⁰ Lopes, 'Questioning neutrality'.

¹¹ For population figures, see, e.g., Repartição Central dos Serviços de Administração Civil – Secção de Estatística, *Anuário Estatístico de Macau. Ano de 1949* [Macau Statistical Yearbook: 1949] (Macau, 1950), pp. 32–3; and M. Teixeira, 'Macau durante a guerra: doce visão de paz!' [Macau during the war: sweet vision of peace!], *Boletim Eclesiástico da Diocese de Macau*, dccclxxxv (1978), 497–518, at p. 498.

¹² See, e.g., J. F. O. Botas, *Macau 1937–1945: Os Anos da Guerra* [Macau 1937–45: the War Years] (Macau, 2012); *Gudao yinxiang: Aomen yu kangri zhanzheng tuzhi* [Lone Island Images: Pictorial History of Macau and the War of Resistance Against Japan], ed. F. Lin and X. Wang (Guangzhou, 2015); and *Wartime Macau: Under the Japanese Shadow*, ed. G. C. Gunn (Hong Kong, 2016).

¹³ M. S. Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses: Macau nas Relações Luso-Chinesas Contemporâneas 1945–2005* [Confluence of Interests: Macau in Contemporary Portuguese-Chinese Relations, 1945–2005] (Lisbon, 2008); and F. G. Pereira, *Accommodating Diversity: the People's Republic of China and the 'Question of Macau' (1949–1999)* (Lisbon, 2013). The main exception is S. F. Wu, 'Shenzhang zhengyi? Zhanhou yindu taoni Aomen hanjian (1945–1948)' [Justice served? Post-war extradition of traitors from Macao by the Nationalist government, 1945–8], *Guoshiguan xueshu jikan* [Bulletin of Academia Historica], i (2001), 128–60.

about the meaning of justice and who got to wield it that had increased significance for both Nationalist China and Portugal's Estado Novo in a period of great change. The Allied victory in the Second World War saw China recognized as an important post-war power. This new international status is perhaps best illustrated by Nationalist China's role in the United Nations. Not only was China a founding member, it was also one of the few to hold a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council. In contrast, Portugal was permitted to join the U.N. only in 1955 and remained a 'rogue state' in subsequent decades due to its rulers' position against decolonization.¹⁴ In their relations with Portugal, the Nationalist authorities sought to affirm China's post-war position as a fully sovereign nation. Portuguese attempts to counter this by acting the sovereign in Macau provide new insight on the limits to decolonization in South China in the late 1940s. While some attempts were made to overcome disagreements and forge smoother Sino-Portuguese relations, often through elite personal connections, most wartime issues – with the exception of extraterritoriality – were left unsolved as the Chinese Civil War unfolded.

Based on multilingual archival sources from Europe and East Asia, including untapped records from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (M.O.F.A.) held in Taiwan and from the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, this article aims to make an important contribution to the ongoing historiographical reappraisal of China's global connections during the war and the early post-war period, as well as to the understudied theme of Nationalist China's diplomatic relations with smaller powers.

If colonial possessions were deemed vital for Portugal's Estado Novo elites, anti-imperialism was a critical aspect of the Nationalist state-building project. Since it had come to power in the wake of the Northern Expedition (1926–8), the K.M.T. had been intent on restoring Chinese sovereignty over parts of the country under foreign rule, achieving some successes before the war with Japan (such as the retrocession of the British-leased territory of Weihaiwei in 1930). In the post-war period, with the highest international status it had enjoyed since the Opium War, the Chinese government sought to affirm its position as a fully sovereign, postcolonial nation, both at home and abroad. If the Japanese occupation and its defeat had ousted foreign rule throughout China, this did not occur in Hong Kong and Macau, governed by European powers that rejected the view that the Second World War had been a global war against imperialism. In the case of Macau, its characteristic ambiguities had been heightened by wartime neutrality. This greatly complicated China's assertions of its postcolonial vision, as it clashed with the Portuguese insistence on maintaining the colonial status quo as if the war, and China's victory in it, meant little.

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The sudden end to the war with Japan's surrender, announced on 15 August 1945 and formally signed on 2 September, caught Portuguese representatives in Shanghai and Macau in a whirlwind of changes that they, like many other foreigners, were often unable to comprehend. After years without a senior diplomat in the Nationalists' capital, Portugal took steps to resume official contacts in China. Initially, the significance of the Allies' success seems to have escaped the Portuguese minister in Shanghai, João Maria da Silva de Lebre e Lima, who had taken up his post in 1938 and remained in the occupied city throughout the conflict. He declined an invitation from the French consul to celebrate the Allied victory, arguing that since Portugal was neutral and kept a diplomatic representation in Japan, 'to celebrate the victory of one power could be

¹⁴ B. C. Reis, 'Portugal and the UN: a rogue state resisting the norm of decolonization (1956–1974)', *Portuguese Studies*, xxix (2013), 251–76.

interpreted as rejoicing in the defeat of another'.¹⁵ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, at the time led by Salazar,¹⁶ emphasized that Lima was authorized to participate in celebrations of victory, in which the government was 'directly interested'.¹⁷ But the unease was evident. A few weeks later Lima informed Lisbon of his wish to leave for the United States at the earliest opportunity due to his wife's health.¹⁸ To replace him, the ministry sent José Rodrigues Simões Affra as chargé d'affaires to Chongqing. There he was told that the Chinese government considered Lima's presence in China undesirable and hoped for his replacement. This was because he 'had always refused to reside' in Chongqing, 'alleging difficulties of relocation that all other colleagues had managed to overcome'.¹⁹ Complaints about Lima had been made several times. A few months before, on a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, the first secretary of the Chinese legation had enquired about the delay in sending a chargé d'affaires to Chongqing; months after being nominated, the official had not yet made the trip, citing health reasons. He noted disapprovingly that during the war the Portuguese minister to China had stayed in Shanghai with no contact with the Chinese government. He had remained in occupied territory, generating 'a confused and "regrettable" diplomatic situation' that ought to be clarified with the end of hostilities.²⁰

However, proximity to the base of the Nationalist government was no guarantee of a better understanding. Affra spent six months in Chongqing from October 1945 and wrote a detailed report about the experience. Revealing his poor adaptation to life in the wartime capital and an incredible dearth of empathy for what the city had gone through,²¹ Affra concentrated on the failings of the Nationalists and what he saw – in typical colonial parlance – as the ordeal of the 'foreigners born in civilized countries'.²² He lived in a hotel owned by the vice premier, H. H. Kung (Kong Xiangxi), Chialing House (Jialing binguan), where many foreign diplomats resided. Although other accounts describe it as a space of relative luxury amid the privations of the wartime capital,²³ Affra decried its supposedly appalling conditions, for which he blamed the Chinese government. The lack of privilege he was experiencing was doubly disconcerting: China was no longer treating all foreigners as superior to the Chinese, and Portugal's diplomatic presence in China was insignificant, as it was the only country to have sent just one representative to Chongqing (Affra was even called the 'one-man legation').²⁴ He moved to Shanghai in 1946 and then to Nanjing, but his description of the latter was also

¹⁵ Arquivo Histórico Diplomático (Archives of Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; hereafter A.H.D.), 2P,A48, M212, Lima to Salazar, minister of foreign affairs, 14 Sept. 1945. All translations by the author.

¹⁶ Salazar, who was president of the Council of Ministers (prime minister) between 1932 and 1968, held a number of other government posts, including that of minister of foreign affairs between 1936 and 1947.

¹⁷ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Salazar to Portuguese legation in Shanghai, 15 Sept. 1945.

¹⁸ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Lima to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter M.N.E.), 6 Oct. 1945. Later correspondence to Lisbon reveals that the U.S. took almost one month to give Lima a visa on his diplomatic passport.

¹⁹ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Affra to M.N.E., 17 Oct. 1945.

²⁰ Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo (Portuguese National Archives; hereafter A.N.T.T.), Arquivo Oliveira Salazar, NE-2A2, cx. 422, Note of conversation with the first secretary of the Chinese legation with Franco Nogueira, M.N.E., 13 Aug. 1945. Also in A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212 (the word *regrettable* is not translated in the original; the rest of the document suggests that the conversation was held in French).

²¹ On the devastating bombing of Chongqing, see E. Tow, 'The Great Bombing of Chongqing and the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–1945', in *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945*, ed. M. Peattie, E. Drea and H. van de Ven (Stanford, Calif., 2011), pp. 256–82.

²² A.H.D., Relatório Anual, J. R. S. Affra, 'Chunking', June 1946, p. 29.

²³ See, e.g., L. Stowe, *They Shall Not Sleep* (New York, 1944), pp. 34–5; and G. Peck, *Two Kinds of Time* (Boston, Mass., 1950), p. 131.

²⁴ Affra, 'Chunking', pp. 33, 38–9.

extremely critical.²⁵ Only in 1947 did Portugal send a minister plenipotentiary to China again, although his opinion of the Nationalists, as will be mentioned later, was probably worse than Affra's.²⁶

In contrast, the Portuguese authorities in Macau were relatively quick to adapt to victory and to seek closer relations with the Nationalists, despite the difficulties springing from the volatile conditions in South China. In early September 1945 the situation around Macau reflected the confusion experienced in many other places when the war in Asia reached an abrupt end. The governor of Macau, Gabriel Maurício Teixeira, reported to Lisbon that some areas were occupied by Chongqing forces, others were still occupied by the Japanese and still others were dominated by Chinese Communist Party (C.C.P.) guerrillas, none of whom advanced on Macau, where the Chinese community filled the streets commemorating peace. The Portuguese authorities joined in with the festivities.²⁷ In a public speech the governor said 'long live' (*viva*) China and Chiang Kai-shek.²⁸ Representatives of the Chinese community in Macau, including the presidents of the Commercial Association, the Kiang Wu Hospital, the Tung Sin Tong Charitable Society and the Chinese Educational Association – key relief organizations during the war years – thanked the Portuguese authorities for the 'benefits received' under Portuguese neutrality.²⁹ Two visions of sovereignty with rather opposing views towards colonialism coexisted in such celebrations: one marked China's victory in a war against imperialism; the other emphasized the shielding effects of a neutrality derived from colonial rule. This contradictory overlap was fragile and easily contested. Indeed, public celebrations of peace did not last for long. A few days later a Portuguese soldier disobeyed the prohibition on crossing the Barrier Gate – which marked the land border with Guangdong province – and was caught by a group of Chinese collaborators and held for exchange by some of their members. The governor appealed to the Chinese authorities, whose regular army forces were increasing in the vicinity, suggesting both impotence to deal with the matter and a desire to foster a constructive relationship with the Nationalists. However, the latter's position was also far from stable, especially in a complex frontier area where the plurality of actors who had engaged in wartime resistance or collaboration (or both) was not always easy to disentangle. According to Teixeira, the Chinese government's forces were clashing with Communist guerrillas while some islands near Macau continued to be under the control of 'pirates' and pro-Japanese Chinese forces.³⁰ The governor recommended that Chongqing appoint a trusted delegate to Macau because he had no way of knowing with whom to discuss matters given that many people came to him saying they were Nationalist officials.³¹ Such confusion would mark the post-war years to a significant extent, though this was due not merely to domestic fractures within China but also to those among the Portuguese.

Nationalist military figures engaged in liberating Guangdong province from the Japanese saw a good opportunity to include Macau in their operations and prepared to

²⁵ A.H.D., Relatório Anual, J. R. S. Affra, 'O Pôsto de Nanquim' [The Nanjing Post], June 1948.

²⁶ 'New Portuguese minister arrives in Nanking', *China Newsweek*, 13 March 1947, p. 9.

²⁷ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to minister of colonies (hereafter M.C.), 5 Sept. 1945. See also 'A grandiosa homenagem da população chinesa a Sua Exa. o Governador da Colônia Comandante Gabriel Teixeira' [The grandiose tribute of the Chinese population to His Excellency the Governor, Commander Gabriel Teixeira], *Renascimento*, 7 Sept. 1945, p. 1.

²⁸ 'Palavras de S. Exa. o Governador' [Words by His Excellency the Governor], *Renascimento*, 5 Sept. 1945, p. 1.

²⁹ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 5 Sept. 1945.

³⁰ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 11 and 12 Sept. 1945.

³¹ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 27 Sept. 1945.

oust the Portuguese by force. Liu Shaowu, who commanded a division under General Zhang Fakui,³² blockaded Macau between November and December, controlling water and land transport and preventing food and energy supplies from entering the enclave. Liu believed that he was strengthening the government's negotiating hand, but the minister of foreign affairs, Wang Shijie, considered that the time was not yet right to recover Macau. Chiang's government asked Zhang Fakui to order Liu to end the blockade.³³ The latter was lifted but only when Portugal accepted to undertake measures to extradite suspects of war crimes, hand over Japanese property and allow the nomination of a M.O.F.A. special commissioner to Macau.³⁴

The retreat of Liu Shaowu ended K.M.T. attempts to retake the enclave by force, but the unfinished business of Macau's decolonization not only remained a matter of public discussion in China but was also occasionally brought to foreign audiences. For example, in August 1946 a newsletter of the Chinese Ministry of Information in London, *China Newsweek*, published an article by a professor of economics at the National Central University in Nanjing advocating Macau's 'return to the motherland in order to clear away the last vestige of the unequal treaties'. One of the reasons given to support this was that Macau had 'served as a perfect refuge for fugitives, gangsters and criminals'.³⁵

The Portuguese authorities did not regard Chinese Nationalist aspirations towards Macau as legitimate, just as they would be unable to engage constructively with other forms of anti-imperialist nationalism elsewhere in the following decades. Nevertheless, some Portuguese policymakers did see these comparatively. In an illustrative example, Charles Stirling, a counsellor at the British embassy in Lisbon, noted how the director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had told him in conversation that 'the attitude of the Chinese towards Macau was much the same as that of the Indian nationalists towards Goa'.³⁶ Portuguese diplomats in China were unimpressed by the Nationalists' new international position and saw Portugal's inflexibility as evidence of the country's exceptionalism. In 1946 the consul at Guangzhou, Amaro Sacramento Monteiro, speculated that this was due 'to the susceptibility originating from the fact that a small power maintains a colony in Chinese territory when the great ones make concessions and court their good will' together with a heightened nationalism fuelled by 'the Americans' attitude who convinced them they also won the war'.³⁷ He further expressed disregard for China's contribution to the war – which is now recognized as significant to the Allied victory³⁸ – in another despatch, in which he referred to the Chinese people as 'drunk with a victory for which they contributed little'.³⁹ In a fourteen-page-long despatch to Lisbon, Affra, the chargé d'affaires then based in Shanghai, also expressed his very negative view of the Nationalists stating that the K.M.T. was 'discredited' and its

³² Zhang Fakui was a distinguished K.M.T. general who was serving as commander-in-chief of the Second Front Army in 1945. He had accepted the Japanese surrender in Guangzhou.

³³ Wu, 'Shenzhang zhengyi?', p. 134; and S. F. Wu, 'Zhongguo kangzhan xia de Aomen juese' [Macau's role in China's war of resistance], in *Jiang Jieshi yu kangzhan shiqi de Zhongguo* [Chiang Kai-shek and China During the War of Resistance], (Yilan, 2013), pp. 43–8, at p. 48 <<http://ccfd.org.tw/cceffoot/filesys/files/dl/CKS-manual.pdf>> [accessed 5 July 2017].

³⁴ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, pp. 44–6.

³⁵ C. Chu, 'Macao's return to China', *China Newsweek*, 1 Aug. 1946, p. 4. Also in The National Archives of the U.K. (hereafter T.N.A.), FO 371/53617.

³⁶ T.N.A., FO 371/53617, C. N. Stirling to foreign secretary Ernest Bevin, 29 Aug. 1946.

³⁷ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M212, Monteiro to Salazar, 9 Jan. 1946.

³⁸ See, e.g., Mitter, *China's War With Japan*.

³⁹ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M212, Monteiro to Salazar, 23 Sept. 1946.

administration was 'inefficient and supremely dishonest'.⁴⁰ He was particularly revolted when Lieutenant General Takashi Sakai, former commander of the Imperial Japanese Army in South China, was publicly executed in Nanjing.⁴¹ In bluntly racist language Affra referred to this event as defining of 'this sordid and barbaric people, in which a pseudo-millenarian civilisation had not managed to infuse a single attribute of moral decency'.⁴² Anger at and dismissal of Nationalist China's post-war actions can be read as unsurprising giving the obstinacy of the Estado Novo elites' colonialist worldview. At least for some, an independent Asian nation serving justice against a formal imperial occupier appears to have been difficult to process.

Contempt for China's post-war position as a major power in the international stage was also expressed a few years later by the Portuguese minister to China, João de Barros Ferreira da Fonseca, who did not hide a certain sympathy for defeated Japan, a country with which Portugal had maintained ambiguously close relations during the war and that was regarded quite favourably by some – but by no means all – Portuguese officials.⁴³ He believed that China's new status had made Sino-Portuguese relations difficult because of the 'natural arrogance' of a country emerging victorious 'over the progressive Japanese empire', although he did admit that the anomalous wartime circumstances when Portugal 'lost contact with the central government' were also to blame.⁴⁴ In an unintendedly ironic statement – for Portugal itself was ruled by an authoritarian regime – Fonseca described the K.M.T. as 'a form of national dictatorship, supported on a single party ... that everyone knows has as little of "democratic" as of "national" or "serious"'.⁴⁵ Another despatch followed a similar logic, stating that some said that Chiang Kai-shek's government 'is little different from a modality of fascism, which the war had destined to be removed', a regime 'where individual freedoms and non-official expressions of thought are severely suppressed'.⁴⁶ Once again, this observation could also be applicable to the Estado Novo dictatorship. While one should be cautious about reading these discriminatory remarks as the sole perspective on the Nationalists circulating in Portuguese diplomatic circles,⁴⁷ they do expose the anxieties of a small European colonial power unable to come to terms with China's post-war status and an increasingly anti-colonial post-war order. They also suggest a certain disjuncture between diplomats in mainland China and the authorities in Macau. The latter's de facto dependency on Chinese goodwill no doubt informed their more accommodating position.

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China promptly embraced its role as a victorious nation but this postcolonial reality found colonial powers like Portugal disinclined to accept its sovereignty in the

⁴⁰ A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Affra to M.N.E., 22 July 1946.

⁴¹ On Sakai's trial, see B. Kushner, *Men to Devils, Devils to Men: Japanese War Crimes and Chinese Justice* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015), pp. 147–53.

⁴² A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Affra to M.N.E., 15 Sept. 1946.

⁴³ Among those critical of wartime Japan was the diplomat Luís Esteves Fernandes, who served as minister in Tokyo during the conflict (L. E. Fernandes, *De Pequim a Washington: Memórias de um Diplomata Português* [From Beijing to Washington: Memoirs of a Portuguese Diplomat] [Lisbon, 2007], pp. 95–122).

⁴⁴ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M211, Fonseca to José Caeiro da Mata, minister of foreign affairs, 29 Jan. 1949.

⁴⁵ A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Fonseca to Caeiro da Mata, 22 March 1947.

⁴⁶ A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Fonseca to Caeiro da Mata, 23 May 1947.

⁴⁷ These negative views contrast with more positive accounts written by diplomats who had witnessed Japanese wartime atrocities, such as the reports penned by the Portuguese consul in Guangzhou at the start of the war (*A Guerra vista de Cantão: Os relatórios de Vasco Martins Morgado, Cônsul-Geral de Portugal em Cantão, sobre a Guerra Sino-Japonesa* [The War Seen From Canton: the Reports of Vasco Martins Morgado, Portugal's Consul General in Canton, About the Sino-Japanese War], ed. A. V. Saldanha [Macau, 1998]).

legal adjudication of problems left by the war. Of central concern to the Chinese representatives was the management of alleged war criminals and their property. Writing to M.O.F.A., the Chinese minister in Lisbon, Zhang Qian, noted that the news of Japan's surrender was received with joy by the people of Portugal. The Portuguese government had informed him that it would recover Timor – which had been under Japanese occupation since 1942 – and the situation of Macau, which had been through difficult times, could be discussed later. Zhang understood Portugal was still harbouring colonial designs.⁴⁸ The Chinese legation in Lisbon sent a note to the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting that Portugal follow the same provisions it had applied to German assets to 'all public and private Japanese assets in Portugal and Portuguese territory as well as to the assets owned or controlled from all territories occupied by Japan and Japanese satellites'.⁴⁹ It would soon become apparent that it was easier for the Nationalists to be treated as a fully sovereign power abroad than in Macau, where their efforts to deal with wartime issues clashed with Portuguese moves to affirm its rule and protect the reputation of its administration. Unlike Portugal, Macau represented two things the Nationalists wanted to overcome in the post-war period: a Chinese territory controlled by a foreign power and a territory that had been subjected to a significant level of Japanese control.

In Portugal disposal of Japanese property was co-ordinated between China, Britain and the U.S.A., an instance of relatively smooth international co-operation between the wartime allies. According to a report written in April 1947 by the American, British and Chinese members of a quadripartite committee for Japanese affairs (a representative of the U.S.S.R. was absent because Portugal had no diplomatic relations with Moscow) to the chiefs of diplomatic missions of those countries, 'plans for taking in custody the official Japanese property in Portugal were made in August 1945'.⁵⁰ The following month guards from the U.S. army were posted in the Japanese minister's residence, the chancery, the military attaché's and the naval attaché's offices. The latter contained 'only office furniture and items without [any] particular value or confidential character, other items having been either destroyed or consolidated in the Legation'. Analysis of the documents in the Japanese legation revealed 'nothing of any interest whatsoever'. After being questioned on this, the Japanese minister informed that 'everything of a confidential nature had been destroyed, on instructions, "immediately after the Potsdam declaration"'.⁵¹ This matches communications intercepted in 1945 revealing that the Japanese legation in Lisbon destroyed telegrams and account books after the German surrender.⁵²

If Japanese assets in Portugal were negligible, in Macau they were considerable and a joint action was harder to co-ordinate. Power sharing with the other key Allied power represented in the territory, Great Britain, was not a priority for the Chinese government, then reeling from Britain's speedy reoccupation of Hong Kong in plain disregard for

⁴⁸ Taiwan, Academia Historica (hereafter A.H.), Waijiaobu [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China], 020000023906A, Putaoya za juan [Portugal-Miscellaneous], Zhang to M.O.F.A., 16 Aug. 1945.

⁴⁹ A.H., Waijiaobu, 020000023906A, Zhang to M.O.F.A., 15 Aug. 1945.

⁵⁰ Taiwan, Academia Sinica-Institute of Modern History (hereafter A.S.-I.M.H.), Waijiaobu, 078.3/0004, Jieshou Riben zhu geguo shi ling guan caichan [Received property from Japanese embassies and consulates abroad], 'Report of the Quadripartite Committee for Japanese Affairs to the chiefs of the diplomatic missions of the United States, the United Kingdom and China at Lisbon, Portugal', 29 Apr. 1947, p. 1.

⁵¹ A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 078.3/0004, 'Report of the Quadripartite Committee', pp. 1–2.

⁵² T.N.A., HW 12/329, Japanese minister in Lisbon to foreign minister, Tokyo, 13 Aug. 1945.

their wartime alliance. In September 1945 the Chinese legation in Lisbon wrote to the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning Japanese assets of 'considerable amount and quantity' accumulated in Macau. It proposed that a 'thorough investigation and inspection of these assets be conducted jointly by the representatives of the Chinese and Portuguese Government[s]'.⁵³ The M.O.F.A. special commissioner appointed to Macau in 1945, Tang Liu, proceeded to transfer some of those assets to China, which motivated the British to try to guarantee that enemy property was dealt with in Macau as in any neutral territory. In September the British ambassador in Chongqing, Horace Seymour, wrote to the vice minister for foreign affairs, Gan Naiguang, to ascertain if the British consul at Macau could be associated with the investigations of Japanese assets in Macau.⁵⁴ Repeated correspondence on this topic over the following year shows that the Nationalists regarded Japanese assets in Macau quite differently from those in Lisbon because the former was considered Chinese territory. British proposals for holding Japanese funds in a joint account,⁵⁵ or leaving Japanese property under Portugal's control,⁵⁶ proved unattractive to the Chinese government.

Taking over Japanese property was regarded by the Chinese government as a reasonable request to face the massive destruction caused by Japan in eight years of war. But the processes of dealing with Japanese assets were not always smooth. In London the Chinese ambassador, Wellington Koo (Gu Weijun), sent a memorandum to the foreign office in 1945 on China's desiderata relating to Japanese reparations. It proposed that the 'full title of property rights, interests and assets of whatever nature belonging to the Japanese Empire and Japanese nationals in the territory of the Chinese Republic ... be considered as having passed to the Chinese Government'.⁵⁷ But the British were cautious in their reply, underplaying the devastation China had experienced. The head of the Foreign Office Far Eastern Department, J. C. Sterndale Bennett, wrote to the treasury that while China 'has suffered much from looting, pillage and destruction by the Japanese armed forces', it had 'suffered nothing like the bomb damage which we in Britain have suffered' and destruction in the British colonies had to be considered. For the British it was important to clarify whether assets were Japanese or seized from British owners.⁵⁸ The existence of places where both the Chinese and the British had competing claims on Japanese property complicated matters. Macau had long been claimed as part of China but it had also been a territory within the British sphere of influence during the war, and these ambiguities complicated the assertion of Chinese sovereignty there in the post-war period. In May 1946 the British embassy in Chongqing enquired on the veracity of a report received from the consul at Macau that a sum in Chinese national dollars in notes, property of the local branch of the Yokohama Specie Bank, had been sent by the M.O.F.A. special commissioner in the enclave to the Bank of China in Guangzhou. If confirmed, the British requested the funds be returned as they had been assured that 'no unilateral decision would be taken regarding the disposal of Japanese assets in Macao'.⁵⁹ The M.O.F.A. confirmed that

⁵³ A.H.D., 2P.A48, M211, Chinese legation in Lisbon to M.N.E., 7 Sept. 1945. Also in A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-2A2, cx. 422.

⁵⁴ A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 078.4/0003, Chuli Aomen diwei caichan [Dealing with enemy and puppet property in Macau], Seymour to Gan, 20 Sept. 1945.

⁵⁵ A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 078.4/0003, Seymour to Wang Shijie, Chinese minister of foreign affairs, 24 Jan. 1946.

⁵⁶ A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 078.4/0003, Seymour to M.O.F.A., 29 Oct. 1946.

⁵⁷ T.N.A., FO 371/46214, 'China's desiderata relating to Japanese reparations', memorandum sent by V. K. Wellington Koo to Bevin, 20 Sept. 1945.

⁵⁸ T.N.A., FO 371/46214, Foreign Office to Treasury, 27 Sept. 1945.

⁵⁹ T.N.A., FO 371/53617, British embassy in Chongqing to M.O.F.A., 22 May 1946.

the notes would be 'deposited in a special account and not touched pending discussions between the governments concerned regarding their disposition'.⁶⁰ It is likely that the records of the Japanese consulate in Macau were also taken to China in this period.⁶¹

Apart from material remains, another trace of Japan's presence in Macau also merited international attention: several Japanese subjects residing in the enclave. Their case shows how a neutral territory was part of the extensive repatriation drive at the end of the Japanese empire, a process itself marked by complex ambiguities.⁶² By the end of the war there were more than fifty Japanese citizens residing in Macau eligible for repatriation. Lists compiled in January 1946 listed forty men, eight women and five children wanting to leave. Some expressed the desire to be repatriated at a later date, either to accompany family members (two women whose husbands were detained in Macau and Guangzhou) or to be able to liquidate their frozen businesses.⁶³ Three Japanese subjects wanted to be repatriated to Formosa, which suggests that they were in fact Taiwanese people with Japanese citizenship. Other Japanese citizens were not registered at the consulate, and the Americans believed some ten to fifteen might be hiding in Macau. Some were deemed of potential intelligence interest also to the British authorities in Hong Kong, who wanted to take them in to be interrogated there. This was the case of the vice consul, Asahina Taiki, who was believed to be a Kempeitai captain.⁶⁴ The Chinese General Headquarters of the National Military Council in Guangzhou were also interested in Japanese men in Macau, notably Fukasako Tomio, ex-manager of the Nan Xing Tobacco Company in Macau, which was described as 'the property of the ex-Puppet-Governor of Korea'.⁶⁵ There were some attempts at joint action in the South China region. For example, General Zhang Fakui asked for the co-operation of the governor of Hong Kong to have the wanted men arrested and sent to Guangzhou for trial. But competing national interests and jurisdictions, as well as complex identity matters, marred extradition procedures.

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Disagreements over Japanese property and extradition of alleged war criminals and collaborators were not only driven by Chinese grievances connected to what had happened during the war but were very much linked to the idea that the ability to serve justice was a marker of a sovereign state. In the uncharted terrain of a postcolonial and post-war new order, Portuguese officials made the most of the control they still retained over Macau, meeting Chinese attempts to seek justice for wartime misdeeds with their own sets of conditions. To the Portuguese authorities, handing alleged Chinese traitors (*hanjian*) to the Nationalists was even more problematic than extraditing Japanese subjects, who were considerably less numerous. Furthermore, among those suspected of collaboration were figures connected to crucial sectors of Macau's economy and, if

⁶⁰ T.N.A., FO 371/53617, M.O.E.A. to British embassy in Nanjing, 4 June 1946.

⁶¹ They are currently held at the No. 2 Historical Archives of China in Nanjing, which contains a significant part of China's government records from the Republican period.

⁶² See, e.g., L. Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009); and J. Sheng, 'Homeward bound: the postwar repatriation of Japanese civilians in Shanghai, 1945–1948', *Asia-Pacific Journal*, xviii (2020) <<https://apjif.org/2020/23/Sheng.html>> [accessed 14 Dec. 2020].

⁶³ In addition to these, there were at least fifteen Japanese subjects with residency in Macau who were not registered at the consulate, most of whom were traders (Archives of Macau, MO/AH/AC/SA/01/19213, Repatriação dos súbditos japoneses residentes em Macau [Repatriation of Japanese subjects resident in Macau]).

⁶⁴ Hong Kong Public Records Office (hereafter H.K.-P.R.O.), HKRS, 163-1-72, Lt. Col. A. S. Roger, defence security officer, Hong Kong, to Secretariat Civil Affairs, Hong Kong, 29 Jan. 1946.

⁶⁵ H.K.-P.R.O., HKRS, 163-1-72, Zhang Fakui to Mark Young, governor of Hong Kong, 3 June 1946.

proven guilty, their closeness to the Portuguese administration would complicate the latter's record of 'strict neutrality'. In November 1945 an editorial in the *Jianguo ribao* urged 'the early repossession of Macao by the Chinese', and the *Dagongbao* reported that the Zhongshan authorities were blockading the territory because of the 'misbehaviour of the Macao authorities for harbouring traitors, conniving smugglers, gamblers, and opium-smokers'. According to the latter, a 'large number of traitors', who had been 'naturalized as Portuguese only by paying several tens of Macao currency dollars as fees', planned to escape to Lisbon on a repatriation ship.⁶⁶ The S.S. *Colonial* left Macau in September 1945 and arrived in the Portuguese capital in March 1946. The Chinese legation in Lisbon asked the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs if among those repatriated were any 'enemy persons and traitors' and their property. The Portuguese secret police guaranteed that no Chinese or Japanese subjects had arrived in Lisbon on the repatriation ship.⁶⁷ Even if that was the case, the ship's passengers had something to say on wartime collaboration, including criticisms of the governor's conduct. Americans in Lisbon got a 'reliable source' to interview some of them. The information was compiled by the U.S. naval attaché in Lisbon in a report that painted a grim picture of Macau as a site of quasi-occupation and collaboration:

The Japanese Army completely controlled Macau. The Portuguese officials, the Chinese resident [*sic*] there and even the Japanese Consul were entirely subservient to them. Receiving orders only from Canton headquarters and acting independently of other Japanese armies in China, the war lords had their General Staff headquarters in Macau, and used it as a pleasure resort where officers spent their leave. Macau was run by brute force during this period, and famine, starvation, disregard of law and order, murder, etc. were rampant. Hundreds of Chinese died on the streets every day, and for a time it is said that their flesh was sold in restaurants as 'smuggled pork from the Japanese zone'. Many Chinese got rich in the service of the Japanese, carrying murder, gambling and the opium trade.⁶⁸

The situation was more nuanced than this report suggests, but it nevertheless constitutes a telling example of some of the strongest criticisms of Portuguese unneutral conduct articulated in the post-war period. Both the Chinese and the Americans saw the war as a turning point for democracy and anti-colonialism, values the Estado Novo leaders did not share and fought against. Thus, Portuguese officials, acting the sovereign in an international environment hostile to right-wing authoritarianism, sought ways to obstruct reasonable Chinese requests to investigate wartime issues after the conflict.

Those who stayed in Macau were of as much concern to the Chinese officials as any potential escapees, but the Portuguese authorities posed some conditions to assist with extradition. A memorandum from the Portuguese legation in Chongqing in December 1945 stated that 'the Portuguese Government had committed [*sic*] itself to refuse asylum to war criminals and to surrender those who eventually took refuge in Portuguese territory at the request of an allied nation, presented to it through regular diplomatic channels'. But to 'avoid any arbitrary action', it would surrender only 'those individuals whose names were included on lists of war criminals approved by a responsible government and containing the indication of the tribunal by which their trials would be conducted',

⁶⁶ T.N.A., FO 371/53617, Extracts from Guangzhou press on 27 Nov. 1945 sent by British consul general at Guangzhou to commander-in-chief in Hong Kong, 29 Nov. 1945.

⁶⁷ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Chinese legation in Lisbon to M.N.E., 23 March 1946; M.N.E. to State Surveillance and Defence Police (hereafter P.V.D.E.) director, 24 Apr. 1946; P.V.D.E. to M.N.E., 30 Apr. 1946.

⁶⁸ T.N.A., FO 371/53617, Copy of report by U.S. naval attaché in Lisbon, 26 Apr. 1946. There were 259 passengers and about 100 Portuguese army personnel stationed in Macau repatriated on the ship.

excluding 'members of the Japanese armed forces and common law criminals', who 'would be surrendered without those formalities'. The memorandum further stated that until then the Portuguese government had not received from the Chinese 'any request of such kind', despite 'arbitrary action of some Chinese army officers' who sought to interfere with the Portuguese administration.⁶⁹ From October 1945 the Portuguese authorities in Macau had been visited by different figures who claimed to be representing the Nationalist government. Delegates of the Chinese War Crimes Commission came to see the governor asking for names of Japanese collaborators and some were given.⁷⁰ The situation soon became confusing, with representatives of that commission, of the Guangdong provincial authorities and of what the governor considered as members of the Blue Shirts competing to take over *hanjian* and their assets.⁷¹ The Portuguese authorities stalled demands, partly in an attempt to understand where power lay, partly – it seems – out of fear for the possibility of a Chinese takeover of Macau. The Chinese minister to Portugal had requested that property belonging to the R.N.G. in Macau should be handed to the Chinese authorities. The Portuguese agreed, as long as there were no doubts that it had belonged to them and that the request was presented in Lisbon through diplomatic channels.⁷² In theory, this would illustrate Portuguese sovereignty over Macau and, in practice, it would lengthen procedures.

The overlapping layers of wartime collaboration proved to be liabilities in the post-war period. Governor Teixeira expressed concern over the possibility of the Chinese authorities asking for 'some of the Macau Chinese [who] cooperated with us', distancing himself from them by noting that they were not 'people of good character [não sejam boas rezes]'.⁷³ The Chinese authorities compiled lists hundreds of pages long of the alleged *hanjian* from Macau that contained information on a variety of people, mainly Chinese but also some Japanese (and possibly Taiwanese). Their suspicious activities were mostly of an economic nature.⁷⁴

One high-profile case was that of Gao Kening (Kou Ho Neng), who was accused of being an economic traitor (*jingji hanjian*). Gao's case is paradigmatic of the ambiguities around alleged collaboration, with parallels to some cases of elites in mainland China.⁷⁵ He was one of the leading businessmen in Macau. A co-owner of the company with the exclusive gambling rights in Macau,⁷⁶ he was also a key figure in the legal opium trade, the pawnshop business (important local financial institutions that were especially relevant during the war) and transportation. He was a major philanthropist who had contributed greatly to a number of relief initiatives in wartime Macau, both Chinese and Portuguese, which earned him several decorations by the Portuguese authorities.⁷⁷ Between 1946 and 1947 China attempted to have Gao extradited but the Portuguese

⁶⁹ A.H., Waijiaobu, 020000003315A, Aomen wenti [Macau issues], Memorandum from the Portuguese legation in Chongqing, 13 Dec. 1945.

⁷⁰ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 2 Oct. 1945.

⁷¹ The Blue Shirts were a secret paramilitary movement loyal to Chiang Kai-shek. On this, see F. Wakeman Jr., 'A revisionist view of the Nanjing decade: Confucian fascism', *China Quarterly*, cl (1997), 395–432.

⁷² A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Salazar to Portuguese legation in Shanghai, 27 July 1946.

⁷³ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 4 Oct. 1945.

⁷⁴ A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 078.4/0007, Aomen de dichan, jianshang, hanjian diaocha mingce [Survey of Macau enemy property, profiteers and traitors].

⁷⁵ See, e.g., T. Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge, Mass., 2005).

⁷⁶ Namely, the Tai Heng (Tai Xing) Company. Gao's partner in the gambling business, Fu Deyin (Fu Tak Iam), was also accused of being a traitor; he was tried in Guangzhou and was acquitted.

⁷⁷ Y. Huang, 'Ru shang bense: Gao Kening de cishan shiye' [Confucian merchant: Gao Kening's charitable activities], *Wenhua zazhi* [Review of Culture], xciii (2014), 38–44.

authorities constantly refused, arguing accusations against him were inconsistent, that his good conduct was well known, and that he had purchased food provisions for the people, not to aid the enemy. Emphasizing Gao's charity work as of greater significance than his wartime businesses affirmed him as someone who served the Chinese at a time of need, while also distancing the Portuguese state that had decorated him from negative associations with collaboration. Whatever Gao – and the Portuguese administration – had done during the conflict under economic and military pressure, was justified by the greater good of social relief. Arguments justifying dealing with Japanese agents to ensure the survival of Chinese civilians did not always work when those on trial were R.N.G. high officials.⁷⁸ But Gao was a private citizen living in an unoccupied neutral territory and he had a strong base of foreign and local elite backing. Major personalities in associational circles in Macau supported him, such as the representative of the Chinese community, Lu Rongxi; the vice chairman of the Kiang Wu Hospital, He Xian (Ho Yin); the chairman of the Tung Sin Tong, Huang Weilin; and the chairman of the Macau Chinese Commercial Association, Liu Baiying.⁷⁹ Gao remained in Macau and his patriotic wartime record, notably his charitable work and financial support to the resistance, was brought forward by his colonial and local elite supporters. The Guangdong High Court decided not to prosecute in December 1948.⁸⁰

Dealing with alleged collaborators saw both sides seeking to affirm their sovereignty and, relating to it, the right to manage judicial procedures over people caught in the middle of the ambiguities of Portugal's presence in China. The following two cases of non-elite men accused of treason – Huang Gongjie (Wong Kong Kit) and Lourenço Oswaldo de Senna – illustrate this in greater detail.

Arguably, no *hanjian* in Macau seems to have been more sought after than Huang Gongjie. A Portuguese missionary who lived in Macau for decades (including during the war), stated that Huang and his wife 'were the greatest criminals in Macao'.⁸¹ Huang, who was in his late thirties to early forties during the war, worked for the Japanese special services in the territory. He headed a group of armed men who were deemed responsible for assassinating many Chinese people and were also linked to the murder of the president of the Macau branch of the Portuguese Red Cross in 1945. The attempts by the Chinese government to have Huang handed over for trial in China proved unfruitful and his subsequent death is revealing of the unsolved problems left by an ambivalent neutrality. Chinese sources show that the Chinese government requested the Portuguese authorities to arrest and extradite Huang.⁸² But the Portuguese were also interested in keeping him as he threatened to provide sensitive information on Portuguese dealings with Japan during the war if he was handed over to the Nationalist authorities. If the country was shown to have been excessively close to Japanese interests, this would tarnish Portugal's reputation, strengthening the Chinese arguments against colonial rule.

The East River Column – a Communist guerrilla group operating in the Pearl River Delta – issued a manifesto on December 1945 concerning 'the war criminal' Huang Gongjie. It stated that Huang and his subordinates had been captured by them and that

⁷⁸ D. Hwang, 'Wartime collaboration in question: an examination of the postwar trials of the Chinese collaborators', *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vi (2005), 75–97.

⁷⁹ Y. Huang, *Tung Shan Tang yu Aomen Huaren shehui* [The Tung Sin Tong and Macau's Chinese Society] (Beijing, 2012), pp. 301–2.

⁸⁰ Huang, 'Ru shang bense', p. 43.

⁸¹ M. Teixeira, 'The Bonnie and Clyde of Macao', in *Macao: Mysterious Decay and Romance*, ed. D. Pittis and S. J. Henders (Hong Kong, 1997), pp. 3–13, at p. 8.

⁸² A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 074/0001, Huang Gongjie.

'after long and careful trials' they were to be 'sentenced to death according to the law of punishment for War Criminals'. However, because Huang had been active in Macau causing much suffering not only to the Chinese but also to the Portuguese, the Column had accepted the request to hand them over to the Macau authorities 'for public trial'.⁸³ Portuguese accounts stated that, after escaping from Macau at the end of the war, Huang was caught on an island west of Hong Kong by the chief of a special brigade of the Macau police, Sebastião Voltaire Pinto de Moraes, in an operation that involved Macau policemen (both Portuguese and Chinese), British intelligence agents and the co-opting of a Communist guerrilla general with whom Huang had planned to link up.⁸⁴ As the manifesto suggests, the guerrillas regarded his wartime crimes as deserving of exemplary punishment. According to the governor, he paid 200,000 patacas (Macau currency) – Nationalist documents mention other sums – in exchange for the prisoner.⁸⁵ After being caught, Huang was brought back to Macau from Hong Kong, where, according to some Portuguese accounts, Moraes managed to bypass the British, whose intelligence services were also interested in capturing Huang.⁸⁶

Once arrested, Huang wrote to the governor of Macau to plea for mercy. He stressed his affection for the city and the role he had played to 'save' it, using his favour with the Japanese to guarantee that the territory did not suffer major aggression. He also recalled that he had once been a Chinese patriot, who had worked for the resistance as an undercover agent, before divisions in his group forced him to seek alternative work in Macau.⁸⁷ This rather self-serving confession seems to be corroborated with earlier Portuguese intelligence that stated Huang had for a while worked for Zhou Yongneng, who had led the K.M.T. branch in Macau, before he left the territory to unoccupied China in 1942. After the K.M.T. branch leader departed to Chongqing, and facing destitution, Huang began to work for the Japanese. He and his gang operated in and around Macau, controlling rice supplies to the enclave, blackmailing and allegedly torturing and killing local traders and going after those deemed enemies of Japan (there was a hit list).⁸⁸ In his letter to the governor, Huang defended his actions, explaining that he had not been the only one to, in his words, 'pursue the path of friendship with [the] Japs' and, therefore, it was terribly unfair that he was now labelled such a great criminal when 'the real sinners in society are allowed to remain'. Addressing Portuguese neutrality with a mixture of praise and threat, he suggested the real danger to Portuguese rule in Macau was coming from the Nationalists, who were already blockading Macau on the pretext of 'cleaning up ... bandits and taking over ... enemy property'.⁸⁹ By exploiting Portuguese colonial anxieties, Huang's words reference an often-overlooked feature of post-war China: the consolidation of the Nationalists as an anti-imperialist force. Their new international status made the authorities from a small colonial power like Portugal somewhat uncomfortable.

⁸³ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, 'Handed to Macao – alleged war criminal arrested by guerrillas', *South China Morning Post*, 10 Dec. 1945.

⁸⁴ Teixeira, 'The Bonnie and Clyde of Macao', p. 11.

⁸⁵ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-10A2, cx. 768, Teixeira to M.C., 10 Dec. 1945; and A.S.-I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 074/0001.

⁸⁶ See, e.g., Teixeira, 'The Bonnie and Clyde of Macao', pp. 11–13; and J. C. Rêgo (Filho), *Os Feitos do Capitão Ribeiro da Cunha Durante o Período da Guerra do Pacífico em Macau* [The Feats of Captain Ribeiro da Cunha During the Pacific War Period in Macau] (Macau[?], 1996), pp. 83–4.

⁸⁷ Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (Portugal, National Overseas Archives; hereafter A.H.U.), Espólio Gabriel Maurício Teixeira, Wong Kong Kit [Huang Gongjie] to governor of Macau, 19 Dec. 1945.

⁸⁸ See several intelligence-related documents among the governor's papers in A.H.U., Espólio Gabriel Maurício Teixeira.

⁸⁹ A.H.U., Espólio Gabriel Maurício Teixeira, Wong to governor of Macau, 19 Dec. 1945.

The Nationalists sought to assert China's new role in the international community, as well as their domestic authority, through organizing war crimes and collaboration trials.⁹⁰ The insistence for people like Huang to be handed over for trial spoke to these national and transnational dimensions of post-war justice. Under Chiang Kai-shek's instructions, the M.O.F.A. delegate in Macau, Tang Liu, wrote to the governor in late December 1945 asking for Huang to be extradited to Guangzhou to be tried. After failed attempts to get the Portuguese to hand Huang over, they finally agreed to do it.⁹¹

However, in early January 1946, as Huang was being moved from one detention centre to another under very suspicious circumstances, he was shot dead after allegedly trying to escape. The local newspapers reported that he had attempted to flee and was pursued by the police, who shot him several times. He was then sent to a hospital, where he died. The Chinese authorities sought to investigate Huang's suspicious death. Tang presented a series of demands to the governor of Macau to ensure this would not happen again. Dai Li, the head of the Nationalist intelligence agency, the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics (Juntong), had investigated the case and concluded in February that the Macau government had collaborated with the Japanese and, worried that Huang Gongjie might reveal secrets to the Chinese, had spent money to get him back to Macau to be killed. The explanation that he had tried to flee was false. Later accounts of the case take for granted that Huang was deliberately shot by the Portuguese.⁹² The strange death of Huang in Portuguese custody contrasts with the efforts of the Nationalists to give him a proper trial. Justice was a key arena for affirming sovereignty and, tellingly, the twists-and-turns of its exercise in Huang's case reflect the problems of dealing with the legacies of an ambivalent neutrality in a contested jurisdiction.

Huang Gongjie was the most notorious, but he was certainly not the only alleged *hanjian* to be at the centre of difficult negotiations between the Nationalist government and the Portuguese authorities. Unresolved debates on the nature of Portuguese sovereignty in Macau, as well as over the classification of *hanjian* as war criminals also marred a process that was marked not only by Portuguese reluctance to hand over suspects to the Chinese authorities, but also by internal conflicts with those in charge of dealing with extradition issues on the Chinese side. Wu Su-feng observed that bribery and obstruction accompanied the attempts of extraditing alleged *hanjian* hiding in Macau, with competing Nationalist officials involved in the process, colonial authorities resisting attempts to extradite some suspects and widespread irregularities, including powerful individuals paying for police protection and avoiding extradition. Impenitent suspects who were arrested in Macau and sent to the mainland largely ended up acquitted by the Guangdong high court due to lack of guilt or of evidence.⁹³ Highlighting practices of corruption, Wu links the limits in the post-war pursuit of justice to the lack of decolonization in 1940s Macau. As it ruled the enclave as a colony, Portugal was able to act like a sovereign and hamper Nationalist agents' efforts to exercise justice as thoroughly as they had intended.

If Huang Gongjie's case exposed the thin line between those acting for resistance and collaboration and the failure to pursue regular legal channels, the case of Lourenço

⁹⁰ Kushner, *Men to Devils, Devils to Men*; and Y. Xia, 'Traitors in limbo: Chinese trials of Russian spies, 1937–1948', *Nationalities Papers* (2020), 1–17, at pp. 1–2 <<https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2020.69>> [accessed 22 Jan. 2021] (pre-print version).

⁹¹ A.S.–I.M.H., *Waijiaobu*, 074/0001.

⁹² A.S.–I.M.H., *Waijiaobu*, 074/0001; Rêgo, *Os Feitos*, p. 84; and R. Pinto, 'Guerra em Paz' [War in Peace], *Macau*, xliii (1995), 54–87, at p. 87.

⁹³ Wu, 'Shenzhang zhengyi?', p. 157.

Oswaldo de Senna is suggestive of the flexible definition of *hanjian* and the intricacies of legal procedures at a time when extraterritoriality was being abolished. This case is also revealing of the ambiguities of nationality and of how different states could – with different levels of (in)success – claim authority over ‘in-between people’ in the post-war order, when citizenship became more narrowly defined than before. Senna, a Portuguese citizen born in Shanghai of a Portuguese father and Chinese mother,⁹⁴ was detained in Chongqing from 1944 until 1950. A Eurasian, he assumed a Chinese identity on certain occasions and wrote to the Portuguese consulate in English only. When the Sino-Japanese hostilities began in 1937, he left for Macau, where he served in the police force. In October 1943 he resigned and went to mainland China in search of a better salary. He adopted a Chinese name and lived first in Guilin and then in Kunming, where he worked for the American Red Cross. In December 1944 Senna was arrested for espionage while he was with his Chinese wife and son and was brought to Chongqing. The Chinese authorities accused him of having raided a clandestine radio station in the house of a Chinese man in Macau, who was arrested; of having had repeated contacts with Japanese people in Macau, including with the consulate; of having handed a number of ‘Chinese patriots’ to the Japanese; and of having spied for the Japanese special service in Macau while in China. Senna claimed he was tortured and forced to sign a confession in Chinese he could not read, and that during the trial he was not given an interpreter and had to use Mandarin, a language he did not master (though he was fluent in spoken Shanghainese and Cantonese).⁹⁵

Portuguese diplomats ensured Senna’s legal costs were covered. As a Portuguese citizen in China, he was still protected under extraterritoriality (which, in Portugal’s case, was abolished only in 1947) and, they reasoned, he could not be tried in Chinese courts for acts he committed in a Portuguese colony while on police duty.⁹⁶ The Macau authorities confirmed Senna’s defence, including that he had even been given a reference by the British consul in Macau before leaving for mainland China.⁹⁷ Senna’s ordeal was to last throughout the civil war, whose outcome would ultimately save him. Although in August 1946 he was reported to have been freed,⁹⁸ in October he was sentenced to ‘imprisonment for an indefinite period of time’ and to have his property confiscated by the Sichuan Higher Court for having collaborated with the enemy ‘in gathering for it military, political an[d] economical [*sic*] information’ about Allied forces in China.⁹⁹ He decided to appeal to the Highest Court in Nanjing and insisted that the verdict was ‘a most terrible miscarriage of justice’ and that he was ‘innocent of any crime or intention against the Chinese Government or any government’.¹⁰⁰ Senna had been charged ‘not as a spy, but as a traitor’, and he wondered how he could have been one if he was not Chinese.¹⁰¹ Although unusual, his case was not unique, as the Chinese authorities tried to bring to justice other foreigners accused of being *hanjian*, notably French and Russian

⁹⁴ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, ‘Portuguese to face trial on espionage count’, *China Daily Tribune*, 8 Oct. 1946.

⁹⁵ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Affra to M.N.E., 2 March 1946; Senna to António Alves Lico, acting consul general for Portugal in Shanghai, 9 Oct. 1946.

⁹⁶ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Affra to M.N.E., 3 June 1946.

⁹⁷ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, A. Telles de Vasconcellos, Macau Civil Administration Services, to Affra, 23 July 1946.

⁹⁸ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Salazar to Portuguese legation in China, 13 Aug. 1946.

⁹⁹ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Copy in English of the Sichuan Higher Court No. 1 Sub-Court criminal case decision, 15 Oct. 1946.

¹⁰⁰ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Senna to Lico, 15 Oct. 1946.

¹⁰¹ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Senna to Lico, undated. Copy attached to despatch from Affra to M.N.E., 17 Dec. 1946.

nationals, as well as people whose Chinese citizenship was, in legal terms, uncertain at best at the time, such as Taiwanese citizens.¹⁰²

Senna's appeal noted that he had inclusively helped the Allies, using his connection with the Macau police to 'furnish the British consulate with information obtained by him from the Japanese' and after the latter became suspicious, he had decided to leave for Free China. He stated that in Macau, only the British consul knew where he was going though in his memoirs, the consul did not seem to be entirely in the know of Senna's innocence.¹⁰³

Portuguese diplomats in China and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon tried to clarify Senna's situation with the Chinese authorities on several occasions to no effect.¹⁰⁴ Chinese representatives used the case to affirm their regained sovereignty in the post-war period. In September 1948 the Chinese minister in Lisbon said the case would be retried but with courts being independent there was a limit to what the government could do. The minister stressed that Senna had confessed to the acts of treason he was being accused of, for which the sentence was usually the death penalty, and that only because of his confession had it been commuted to life.¹⁰⁵ In early November 1949 Senna was condemned again.¹⁰⁶ Statements backing his defence had been written in Macau by, among others, the governor and the former British consul,¹⁰⁷ but these were deemed too vague in court. A letter to the Chinese minister to Portugal, Wang Huazheng, pleaded that the Portuguese government expected from the Chinese an 'attitude of generosity' similar to that shown by the British government, which had freed and deported Rogério de Menezes, a Portuguese citizen who had been sentenced to death for espionage.¹⁰⁸ The comparison is intriguing, for Menezes was indeed guilty of spying for the Germans when working for the Portuguese legation in London.¹⁰⁹ The reply was similar to his predecessor's the year before: he would relay the request to his government for consideration.¹¹⁰ At the end of November Senna was finally freed as the warden of Chongqing prison received orders to release all prisoners as the Nationalists fled the city. His escape is revealing of the networks to which foreigners in China could resort in troubled times – and also how these were still standing in the 1949 transition to Communist rule. Senna left Chongqing with the help of the Paris Foreign Catholic Mission Society, travelling by boat to Hankou, where he reported to the British consulate, which was in charge of Portuguese interests. In Hankou he asked for help at the Colombian Catholic Mission and stayed with Portuguese friends but was taken by the police and was questioned over a few days. According to Senna's statement, the Communists treated him quite nicely, only asking him for information on British, American and missionary contacts. After being offered a book of Mao Zedong's

¹⁰² M. C. Bergère, 'The purge in Shanghai, 1945–6: the Sarly Affair and the end of the French Concession', in *Wartime Shanghai*, ed. W. H. Yeh (London, 1998), pp. 161–80; Y. Xia, *Down With Traitors: Justice and Nationalism in Wartime China* (Seattle, 2017), pp. 141–72; and Xia, 'Traitors in limbo'.

¹⁰³ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Copy of 'Petition incorporating additional grounds for appeal against decision of High Court at Chungking, submitted to the Highest Court at Nanking', sent with letter from Tsai Kuo Han, attorney-at-law, to Lico, 1 Feb. 1947; and J. P. Reeves, *The Lone Flag*, ed. C. Day and R. Garrett (Hong Kong, 2014), p. 103.

¹⁰⁴ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Affra to M.N.E., 26 Jan. 1948.

¹⁰⁵ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, A. da Faria, M.N.E., note of conversation with the Chinese minister to Portugal, 23 Sept. 1948.

¹⁰⁶ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Senna to Fonseca, 3 Nov. 1949; Affra (in Macau) to M.N.E., 9 Nov. 1949.

¹⁰⁷ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263.

¹⁰⁸ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, V. Cunha, M.N.E. to Wang, 14 Nov. 1949.

¹⁰⁹ J. A. Barreiros, *O Homem das Cartas de Londres* [The Man of the London Letters] (Lisbon, 2003); and Pimentel, *Espões em Portugal*, pp. 281–7.

¹¹⁰ A.H.D., 2P, A59, M263, Caeiro da Mata to Affra, 14 Nov. 1949.

writings he ended up being expelled to Hong Kong via Guangzhou. At the Hong Kong border, as he had no passport, Senna once again assumed a Chinese identity to enter the British colony and from there he went to Macau.¹¹¹

This case highlights how the ambivalences of the Portuguese presence in China could intersect with issues of collaboration and the misunderstandings these generated in the post-war period, when attempts were made to impose a nation-state-based sovereign-order through decisions on who was a citizen, who was a 'traitor', and how – and by whom – justice should be administered. For the Portuguese authorities, Senna's case was a vivid example of the shortcomings of Chinese justice, with its Kafkaesque delays and refusals to accept the arguments provided to justify the innocence of a foreign citizen. From a Chinese perspective, suspicions about Senna were arguably also understandable. He was seen as Chinese, and the Nationalist government did not treat collaboration lightly. While in China Senna had assumed a Chinese identity and lived with his Chinese family. The fact that he had worked for the police in Macau and then appeared in cities in unoccupied China with a strong presence of Allied intelligence without, it seems, assuming his Portuguese nationality, would have seemed odd. Furthermore, it was well known that Portuguese citizenship had been granted to people with spurious claims on it during the war so brandishing it might have not been given too much credit.¹¹² Like other allegations of Portuguese wartime misconduct, Senna's case was dropped at the end of the civil war and was left lying largely hidden in the archives,¹¹³ as yet another forgotten example of the problems between the Portuguese and the Nationalists in the changing post-war order, when it suddenly became paramount to draw clear lines between 'patriots' and 'traitors', and matters of jurisdiction over mobile people like Senna became more contentious and inflexible.

★

As Senna's trials and tribulations indicate, a key element of tension in solving wartime issues and exercising Chinese sovereignty pertained to the remnants of extraterritoriality. Extraterritoriality was a legal regime that permitted citizens of countries with such rights in China to be placed outside the latter's jurisdiction, answering to their resident consul and facing trial in consular courts. It had long been one of the most contentious issues in the R.O.C.'s foreign relations. Strongly opposed by Chinese governments, particularly after the end of the First World War, its abolition began to be seriously negotiated when the Nationalists came to power in the late 1920s, although the start of the Second Sino-Japanese conflict halted the process.¹¹⁴ In a first phase discussions for its abolition were postponed, but the later globalization of the conflict precipitated the end of the system when the U.S. and the United Kingdom both took steps to abolish extraterritorial rights

¹¹¹ A.H.D., 2P,A59, M263, Report written by Senna sent by Affra, from Macau, to M.N.E., 7 Feb. 1950.

¹¹² Writing to Lisbon on the cold reception given by the new mayor of Shanghai, K. C. Wu (Wu Guozhen), to a courtesy visit by the Portuguese consul, José Francisco Teixeira, the Portuguese chargé d'affaires to China, who had met Wu several times in Chongqing, noted that Portugal's consulate general in Shanghai enjoyed 'a very sad reputation'. The former consul, José Augusto Ribeiro de Melo, was rumoured to have practiced irregularities that brought scandal to the consulate, notably registering as Portuguese citizens people of various nationalities, particularly Chinese (A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Affra to Salazar, 6 June 1946).

¹¹³ The case is briefly mentioned in Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, pp. 46–7.

¹¹⁴ On the complexity of this legal regime, see P. K. Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford, 2012); on its abolition, see W. R. Fishel, *The End of Extraterritoriality in China* (Berkeley, 1974); on remnants after the war, see B. A. Elleman, 'The end of extraterritoriality in China: the case of the Soviet Union, 1917–1960', *Republican China*, xxi (1996), 65–89; and Y. Zheng, 'A specter of extraterritoriality: the legal status of U.S. troops in China, 1943–1947', *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, xxii (2015), 17–44.

on paper in 1943 facing the fact that they had already been abolished in practice. Contrary to what is often mentioned, negotiations for the end of extraterritoriality with other countries actually continued during the post-war period. The Portuguese government managed to stall the process for longer than most, renouncing extraterritoriality only in 1947, although the main reason for doing so was not resistance to give up rights in mainland China but its refusal to include Macau in the negotiations.

Chinese diplomats in Lisbon had tried several times to address extraterritoriality during the war, but the matter was constantly postponed by Portugal. In 1944 the first secretary in Lisbon was told that Portugal would make a decision when the act of abolishing extraterritoriality would not be seen as an action against one of the belligerents.¹¹⁵ Such an agreement with Chiang's government could instigate retaliation by Japan, including a potential occupation of Macau that, with the war still ongoing, would benefit neither the Portuguese nor the Nationalists. Portuguese policymakers were closely following the developments of other countries' negotiations with China, asking its diplomats in different European countries and in and Brazil for information on their cases. France, also a colonial power with interests in China, was an important reference. The Chinese government had unilaterally denounced all French privileges at the time of the Vichy regime but such was not immediately accepted by the post-war French government. Eventually France reached an agreement on the return to Chinese sovereignty of the leased territory of Guangzhouwan before negotiating the end of extraterritoriality, in late February 1946.¹¹⁶ However, there was an important difference between the French and the Portuguese positions. In French concessions in China and in Guangzhouwan, occupation by Japan towards the end of the war had paved the way to de facto decolonization. In Macau neutrality had spared the Portuguese the precedent of having been removed from power.

Soon after the war ended, the Chinese legation in Lisbon insisted that negotiations begin with the Portuguese government to abolish extraterritoriality. In September the minister, Zhang Qian, went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to press Portugal to relinquish its rights in China.¹¹⁷ The Sino-Portuguese Treaty signed in Nanjing in December 1928 had scheduled the abolition of extraterritoriality to 1930, provided that the Chinese government signed agreements with the signatory powers of the 1921–2 Washington Treaties and made detailed agreements with Portugal for the matter.¹¹⁸ With the end of the war, the Portuguese government was pressured to initiate negotiations. In 1945, on the R.O.C. national day, 10 October, a note was delivered to the Chinese minister in Lisbon in which the Portuguese government declared its decision to renounce extraterritoriality and that that should come into effect after the signing of a Sino-Portuguese convention to be negotiated.¹¹⁹ The note was relayed to Chongqing at the end of the month.¹²⁰

Before such an agreement was sealed, however, a number of contentious issues hampered the negotiations. In December 1945 the Chinese legation in Lisbon stated

¹¹⁵ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Notes on talk between F. Nogueira, M.N.E. and the first secretary of the Chinese legation, 16 June 1944.

¹¹⁶ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Portuguese legation in Paris to M.N.E., 12 Sept. 1945; Portuguese legation in Chongqing to M.N.E., 1 March 1946.

¹¹⁷ A.H., Waijiaobu, 020000006303A, Putaoya zhu Hua gongshi Lima Feileila rennei [Portuguese ministers in China: Period in office of Lima and Ferreira da Fonseca], Zhang to M.O.F.A., 19 Sept. 1945.

¹¹⁸ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Project of note, Sept. 1945.

¹¹⁹ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, M.N.E. to Portuguese legation in Shanghai, 10 Oct. 1945.

¹²⁰ A.H., Waijiaobu, 020000023906A, Zhang to M.O.F.A., 28 Oct. 1945.

that the consular courts of all powers had ceased to operate in China and Portugal was to be no exception.¹²¹ Portugal refused as it had not yet finished negotiating the relinquishment of its extraterritorial privileges.¹²² The issue was particularly significant given the detention of some Portuguese citizens in China accused of different crimes, including collaboration, against which legal protections from facing trial in a Chinese court could be useful.

Then there was the ever-thorny question of Macau. If the latter was treated as a foreign concession, the door would be open for decolonization. The Chinese government intended to reserve its position on Macau but, predictably, this was deemed unacceptable by the Portuguese authorities, as the Portuguese chargé d'affaires relayed to the Chinese vice minister of foreign affairs in Nanjing.¹²³ The only reservation the Portuguese government would be open to consider was on the borders of Macau, not on Portuguese sovereignty over the enclave.¹²⁴

Metropolitan and local approaches to Macau did differ at times. The governor saw in the extraterritoriality negotiations a good opportunity to fix the disputed borders of the territory to Portugal's advantage. He advised the minister of colonies that although it would be difficult, Portugal should try to obtain Montanha (Da Hengqin) island in exchange for clearly renouncing Lappa (Duimianshan) and D. João (Xiao Hengqin)¹²⁵ – none of which Portugal de facto controlled. The fact that a 1946 official map excluded the islands from the country's jurisdiction suggests that the Portuguese government took a different position from the Macau authorities.¹²⁶ In November 1946, without Lisbon's knowledge, the latter banned the distribution of an edition of the *South China Morning Post* due to a news report on Sino-Portuguese negotiations for the abolition of extraterritoriality on the pretext that it suggested that Macau was equivalent to other foreign concessions in China.¹²⁷

The Chinese government had prepared a draft for a Sino-Portuguese treaty with fourteen articles to be celebrated possibly in Lisbon and that included the transfer of the administration and control of Macau to the R.O.C.¹²⁸ Predictably, the Portuguese government did everything in their power to prevent the Macau issue from being linked to its renunciation of extraterritorial rights in China. It is important to note that the Portuguese Estado Novo regime's intransigence regarding its colonial possessions was not a matter for open public debate. The majority of people in Portugal were kept in the dark about the foreign policy decisions made by the country's leaders. Indeed, unlike in China, there was no news in the Portuguese press about the exchange of notes with China when it eventually occurred.¹²⁹

¹²¹ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Chinese legation in Lisbon to M.N.E., 18 Dec. 1945.

¹²² A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Affra to M.N.E., 15 Feb. 1946.

¹²³ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, M.N.E. to Portuguese legation in Chongqing and embassies in London and Washington, D.C., 16 March 1946; Portuguese legation in China (Nanjing) to M.N.E., 25 July 1946.

¹²⁴ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Salazar to Portuguese legation in Shanghai, 2 Sept. 1946.

¹²⁵ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Ministry of Colonies to M.N.E., 21 Jan. 1946.

¹²⁶ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, p. 68.

¹²⁷ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, 'Hongkong paper banned by Macao', *North China Daily News*, 24 Nov. 1946; acting governor of Macau to M.C., Dec. 1946.

¹²⁸ A.H. (Xindian), Xingzheng yuan [Executive Yuan], 01400000186A, ZhongPu qianding pingdeng xinyue an [Signing of a new equal treaty between China and Portugal].

¹²⁹ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, p. 82. For Chinese news reports, see e.g. 'Pu quxiao zai Hua tequan' [Portugal abolishes privileges in China], *Shenbao*, 2 Apr. 1947.

After a lengthy period of impasse an agreement was reached between Portugal and the R.O.C. to postpone indefinitely the discussion of the 'Macau problem' and thus withdraw the major impediment to the negotiations for the abolition of Portuguese extraterritorial rights in China. It has been argued that with the civil war looming, it became pressing for Chiang Kai-shek's regime to secure a diplomatic victory – even without Macau's handover – in order to appease sectors of the Chinese public who were becoming increasingly hostile to the K.M.T.¹³⁰ However, in 1947 the Nationalists' defeat was not yet a *fait accompli* and, in any case, the agreement with Portugal was far from a major breakthrough. There were also advantages to Portugal in reaching a settlement, as this agreement restored Sino-Portuguese relations to normalcy after years of ambivalent practice during the war and left Macau with the guarantee of a continued status quo.

Notes 'for the relinquishment by Portugal of its rights relating to the consular jurisdiction in China and the adjustment of certain other matters' were finally exchanged between the Portuguese minister, J. B. Ferreira da Fonseca, and the Chinese minister of foreign affairs, Wang Shijie, in Nanjing on 1 April 1947.¹³¹ The notes abrogated all the 'provisions of treaties or agreements in force [the wording 'in force' allowed for the exclusion of Macau, the jurisdiction of which had never been unequivocally clarified] between both countries which authorize the Government of Portugal or its representatives to exercise consular jurisdiction over nationals or companies of the Republic of Portugal in the territory of the Republic of China'.¹³² Excluding a financial agreement between China and Macau and an agreement signed in 1948 between the Macau authorities and the Chinese Maritime Customs concerning smuggling between Macau and South China,¹³³ the notes relinquishing consular jurisdiction were the last diplomatic agreement between Portugal and the R.O.C. to be signed until the official breaking of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1975.¹³⁴

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The absence of Macau in the 1947 notes did not settle the problems left by its ambiguous wartime neutrality. After Portuguese extraterritoriality was officially abolished, calls for the retrocession of the territory intensified in the Chinese press. A critical discourse on the ambiguities of wartime experience was key to those. The undemocratic nature of the Portuguese regime and the existence of 'immoral activities' in Macau (gambling, opium and prostitution) were also pointed out. Critics claimed that the enclave 'had been the centre of Japanese espionage and refuge for "collaborationists" during the war', that neutrality had not been maintained, and that Portugal had 'helped the enemy'.¹³⁵ A letter to the editor of the *China Weekly Review* went as far as to portray the governor during the war as 'a warm-hearted collaborator with the "Imperial Army"'.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, a

¹³⁰ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, pp. 72–3.

¹³¹ A.H., Waijiaobu, 020000023907A, Putaoya za juan (er) [Portugal: Miscellaneous (II)]; also in A.H., Guomin zhengfu, 001000005349A, Lingshi caipan quan chefei (wu) [Abolition of consular jurisdiction (V)] and A.H., Xingzheng yuan, 01400000186A.

¹³² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Treaties Between the Republic of China and Foreign States (1927–1957)* (Taipei, 1958), pp. 412, 414.

¹³³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Treaties*, pp. 415–21.

¹³⁴ On the closing of the R.O.C. legation in Lisbon, see files in A.S.–I.M.H., Waijiaobu, 310.11/006, Wo guanbi zhu Pu gongshiguan [Our closing of the legation in Portugal]. On Portugal's diplomatic switch from the R.O.C. to the P.R.C., see Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, pp. 345–461; and M. S. Fernandes, 'Uma Relação Assimétrica: A Ata das Conversações sobre a Questão de Macau era uma Exigência Imperativa Chinesa para a Normalização das Relações com Portugal em 1979' [An asymmetrical relationship: the minutes of the talks on the Macau issue were the crucial condition for mainland China to normalize relations with Portugal in 1979], *Relações Internacionais*, lx (2018), 141–57.

¹³⁵ A.H.D., 2P, A48, M211, Fonseca to Caeiro da Mata, 29 Jan. 1949.

¹³⁶ 'Return of Macao', *China Weekly Review*, 17 May 1947, p. 305.

resolution was passed by members of the People's Political Council (P.P.C.) asking the government for Macau's return as the issue had not been included in the agreement abolishing extraterritoriality.¹³⁷ The following month twenty-one P.P.C. members presented recommendations to the president of the Executive Yuan, Zhang Qun, advocating 'the immediate recovery of Macau' arguing that 'during the war, Portugal violated her neutrality to the detriment of China's war efforts'.¹³⁸ In July the Legislative Yuan decided that steps should be made for the 'recovery' (*shouhui*) of Macau 'at the earliest possibility' (*zui duan shi nei*). The government ordered the Executive Yuan to start negotiations with the relevant authorities.¹³⁹

Macau was portrayed as a place where suspects of war crimes and collaboration avoided Chinese justice. An article in the K.M.T.'s official newspaper *Zhongyang ribao* (Central News Daily) labelled Macau a 'criminals' playground' (*fanzuizhe de leyuan*).¹⁴⁰ In an attempt to placate this sort of attack, which damaged Portuguese prestige by questioning the legitimacy of its sovereignty claims, the consul in Hong Kong, Eduardo Brazão, approached the British authorities in search of some inter-imperial solidarity, playing on yet another of the ambiguities that had shaped the war years in Macau.¹⁴¹ The response was lukewarm. Taking a different stand on the matter, the consul in Guangzhou, José Calvet de Magalhães, argued that a joint action with Britain would not be advantageous to Portugal and the country should act independently.¹⁴² Sino-British interactions had been experiencing a number of clashes linked to the Kowloon Walled City, including the burning of the British consulate in Guangzhou in January 1948. In contrast, relations with Portugal entered a more positive track.

Elite personal connections were crucial to the gradual improvement in relations between the Portuguese and the Nationalist authorities in the late 1940s. In August 1947, shortly after a branch of the Chinese Central News Agency was established in Macau,¹⁴³ Sun Fo (Sun Ke), Sun Yat-sen's son and president of the Legislative Yuan since 1932 (who would become premier in 1948) was invited by the governor to visit Macau, where some of his family, including his mother, still lived.¹⁴⁴ In the run-up to his visit the M.O.F.A. delegate in Hong Kong told the Portuguese consul that he was worried that the Macau government would give Sun Fo an overly grand reception, making his visit appear official.¹⁴⁵ That could be presented as a tacit acknowledgement of Portuguese sovereignty over Macau. Although labelling it a 'personal visit', the authorities in Macau gave Sun an impressive welcome, and the consul concluded that Sun's passage through Macau as a 'guest of honour' was of 'great utility'.¹⁴⁶ Sun's words on Sino-Portuguese friendship at a banquet made the news even in Lisbon.¹⁴⁷ At the end of the month it was

¹³⁷ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, 'China wants return of Macao', *China Mail*, 12 Apr. 1947.

¹³⁸ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., UL-10A3, cx. 769, Pt. 1, 'Return of Macao', *South China Morning Post*, 22 May 1947.

¹³⁹ A.H., Xingzheng yuan [Executive Yuan], 01400000186A, Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese government to Executive Yuan, 8 July 1947.

¹⁴⁰ 'Fanzuizhe de leyuan, Aomen' [Macau, criminals' playground], *Zhongyang ribao* [Central Daily News], 10 July 1947.

¹⁴¹ See, e.g., H. F. S. Lopes, 'Inter-imperial humanitarianism: the Macau delegation of the Portuguese Red Cross during the Second World War', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xlvii (2018), 1125–47.

¹⁴² J. C. Magalhães, *Macau e a China no Após Guerra* [Macau and China in the Post-war Period] (Macau, 1992), p. 31.

¹⁴³ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, p. 96.

¹⁴⁴ Sun Yat-sen is considered the 'founding father' of the Republic of China. He was the first provisional president of the Republic of China in 1912, had been (and continued to be until his death in 1925) the leading figure among republican revolutionaries in China. He was the founding figure of the Kuomintang (although he did not live to see the party rule China).

¹⁴⁵ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Brazão to M.N.E., 20 Aug. 1947.

¹⁴⁶ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Brazão to M.N.E., 25 Aug. 1947.

¹⁴⁷ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, 'É Necessário que Não Haja Razões que Possam Destruir a Amizade que Existe entre Portugal e a China' [There must not be any reasons to destroy the friendship that exists between Portugal and China], *O Século*, 23 Aug. 1947.

reported in the Macau press that Chiang Kai-shek had ordered Chinese newspapers in Guangdong to stop their calls for the handover of Macau.¹⁴⁸ The Portuguese could read visits such as Sun Fo's as *their* successes and as an implicit recognition of their sovereignty in Macau even if those had nothing to do with sanctioning Portugal's colonial rule. The enthusiastic welcome Sun received from Macau's residents can, in fact, be seen as an expression of Chinese patriotism. Still, the pursuit of good relations with the Nationalists illustrated that the Portuguese in China knew where the ultimate decision-making power over Macau lay: not in Lisbon but in the Chinese capital.

This restoration of amiable ties with Nationalists figures can be understood in a context of changing priorities in the region, notably the co-optation of foreign circles to secure a pro-Chiang, anti-Communist redoubt in South China.¹⁴⁹ Personal connections, some forged during the war were important for this. In September 1947 a new governor arrived in Macau, Albano Rodrigues de Oliveira. He had lived in China in 1937–8, having been interim consul general at Guangzhou, where he had befriended the then governor Wu Tiecheng, a major K.M.T. figure. Oliveira went on an official visit to the city the same month he assumed the governorship.¹⁵⁰ He was received by General Zhang Fakui; the provincial governor, Luo Zhuoying; the mayor of Guangzhou, Ouyang Ju; and Admiral Chan Chak (Chen Ce).¹⁵¹ This connection was nurtured in the following years, with Oliveira considering Wu Tiecheng 'an old friend'.¹⁵² Wu was appointed minister of foreign affairs at the end of 1948 and when meeting the Portuguese minister in Nanjing in the first audience given to members of the diplomatic corps, Wu referred to the 'very good personal and official relations' he had had with the governor of Macau in the past.¹⁵³ Bilateral relations also improved markedly after the appointment of premier T. V. Soong (Song Ziwen) as governor of Guangdong in the same month.¹⁵⁴ Soong – who was Chiang Kai-shek's brother in law and had been minister of foreign affairs during the war – had told the consul at Guangzhou, Calvet de Magalhães, that he expected Portuguese co-operation so that asylum was not given in Macau to 'political discontents' of the region – a likely reference to the C.C.P. and other opponents of Chiang.¹⁵⁵ Chinese relations with Portugal and Macau improved significantly, due in part to the very cordial relationship that developed between Soong and Calvet de Magalhães. In a fifteen-page despatch the consul exposed his appreciation for Soong, who he perceived positively as the most Westernized politician in China who wanted to modernize China along Western models, a description that matches similar accounts of the period such as *Thunder Out of China*, which the consul quoted.¹⁵⁶ Highlighting the new state of

¹⁴⁸ 'Ordem Sensacional de Chiang Kai Shek' [Chiang Kai-shek's sensational order], *Notícias de Macau*, 27 Aug. 1947, p. 1. On Chiang's intervention, see also A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Fonseca to M.N.E., 4 Sept. 1947; and A.H.D., 2P,A48, M211, Fonseca to Caeiro da Mata, 29 Jan. 1949.

¹⁴⁹ H. T. Lin and S. F. Wu, 'America's China policy revisited: regionalism, regional leaders, and regionalized aid (1947–49)', *Chinese Historical Review*, xix (2012), 107–27.

¹⁵⁰ 'Visita a Cantão de S. Exa. o Governador de Macau' [His Excellency the governor of Macau's visit to Canton], *Notícias de Macau*, 22 Sept. 1947, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ 'A Viagem Triunfal de S. Exa. o Governador' [His Excellency the governor's triumphal trip], *Notícias de Macau*, 25 Sept. 1947, p. 1.

¹⁵² Oliveira, quoted in A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, despatch from M.C. to M.N.E., 30 Aug. 1948.

¹⁵³ A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Fonseca to M.N.E., 30 Dec. 1948.

¹⁵⁴ T.V. Soong remained as governor of Guangdong province until 1949.

¹⁵⁵ A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Calvet de Magalhães to M.N.E., 20 Oct. 1947.

¹⁵⁶ T. H. White and A. Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China* (New York, 1946, repr. 1975), pp. 263–6; and A.H.D., 2P,A47, M151, Calvet de Magalhães to Caeiro da Mata, 28 Nov. 1947.

relations, the Chinese Double Ten (10 October) national day was effusively celebrated in Macau in 1947. The main Portuguese-language newspaper went as far as to post on the front page portraits of Sun Yat-sen; Lei Peng Seak, president of the Macau Branch of the K.M.T.; and Guo Zefan, the M.O.F.A. delegate since 1946, accompanied by quotes on democracy¹⁵⁷ – a concept controversial in Portugal's *Estado Novo*. The Nationalists also won a symbolic victory when the Portuguese authorities finally agreed to ban opium in Macau, a decision the latter would probably not have taken on their own volition. The trade was banned in late 1945, and opium houses were closed in mid 1947, after the implementation of rehabilitation plans for addicts.¹⁵⁸ This shows that the Nationalists were able to shape developments in post-war Macau even without retaking control of its administration.

The Nationalists were also successful in ending Portuguese claims over islands around the enclave. In January 1948 Soong asked Calvet de Magalhães – who had come to see him about rice supplies – to intervene with the Macau government to recall the Portuguese police officers posted at Maliaho, on Montanha island.¹⁵⁹ Two police officers had remained there since the war, when governor Artur Tamagnini de Barbosa had tried to use the Japanese invasion as a pretext to extend Portuguese control over the islands through a police presence.¹⁶⁰ Chinese control over the island finally resumed in full. Despite an improvement in bilateral relations, the Nationalists did not give up on the goal of affirming their sovereignty over Macau. Among the proposals presented at the National Assembly in April 1948 was one calling for the retrocession of the territory.¹⁶¹

As relations between the Nationalists and the Portuguese took a more positive turn, the uncomfortable ambiguities of neutrality were reinterpreted in a more favourable light. In April 1948, on the occasion of the commemorations in Macau of the twentieth anniversary of Salazar's rule, figures of the Chinese community praised Portugal's role in the war, dispelling accusations of collaboration. Guo Zefan highlighted the ceding of basing rights in the Azores as a valuable act of Portuguese co-operation with the Allies. Then chairman of the board of directors of the Commercial Association Liu Baiying mentioned how many 'cultivated individuals, merchants and capitalists' from all over China had sought refuge in Macau during the war and contributed to the development of the enclave's commerce and industry,¹⁶² an observation that can be prone to different readings given how some of these figures had been intermediaries between the Portuguese authorities and Japanese and R.N.G. authorities.

The importance of personal connections with certain notable figures of late-K.M.T. rule in the mainland was stressed by Portuguese actors until a fairly late stage of the civil war but there was a limit to what these could achieve. In 1948 the Portuguese minister to China wrote several times to Lisbon recommending the upgrade of the Portuguese legation to embassy, stressing that only a few countries still kept legations instead of embassies and ministers plenipotentiaries instead of ambassadors. Given

¹⁵⁷ 'O Duplo Dez' [Double ten], *Notícias de Macau*, 12 Oct. 1947, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ On the abolition of the government's Opium Regie, see *Boletim Oficial de Macau* [Macau Official Bulletin], 31 Dec. 1946, p. 1007. Opium suppression measures were regarded as a way of placating Chinese claims to retake Macau, but their implementation in the enclave was seen as only partly effective ('Macao hits the doldrums', *China Weekly Review*, 6 Sept. 1947, p. 12).

¹⁵⁹ A.H.D., 2P, A47, M151, M.N.E. to Ministry of Colonies, 23 Jan. 1948.

¹⁶⁰ Lopes, 'Questioning neutrality', pp. 93–6.

¹⁶¹ A.H.D., 2P, A47, M151, Fonseca to M.N.E., 20 Apr. 1948.

¹⁶² A.N.T.T., A.O.S., UL-10A3, cx. 769, Pt. 2.

Portuguese interests in China, he noted, this matter could affect the country's prestige.¹⁶³ Despite this suggestion, the legation's status was not elevated.

As the Nationalists lost ground in the civil war against the C.C.P., Portugal, as most other countries, remained neutral. The experience of neutrality during China's war with Japan provided a peculiar 'blueprint' for Portuguese actions on the ground. Just as they had done during the war with R.N.G. officials in Guangdong, the authorities in Macau despatched a few envoys to forge links with the Communists to ensure the status quo of colonial rule. One of these envoys was Pedro Lobo, the influential head of the Macau Economic Services, who had been a key intermediary figure during the war. Lobo was sent as 'special emissary' to deal with the future authorities of neighbouring districts to guarantee the 'regular supply of goods' needed by the enclave.¹⁶⁴ Another envoy was captain Francisco da Costa Gomes, who would become the second president of the Portuguese Republic after the end of the Estado Novo dictatorship. He later stated that before the end of the civil war he went on a 'secret mission' to hand over two C.C.P. members detained in Macau to prevent them from falling into Nationalists' hands. He claimed he 'had always had good relations with the Chinese Communists', knowing they 'did not intend to attack Macau'.¹⁶⁵ In the 1940s the K.M.T. was arguably perceived as more anti-imperialist than the C.C.P. by some Portuguese figures and the Communists' accommodating stance – as their main adversary was, then, the Nationalists – eased communications with the Macau representatives. In fact, as Fernandes noted, Mao had made its position on Macau clear to a Soviet envoy in early 1949: although eradicating imperialist privileges and agents in China were priorities for the C.C.P., he advocated 'more flexible solutions or a peaceful transition policy that required more time'.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the Portuguese minister to China, admittedly unsure of the C.C.P.'s ideological alignments with the U.S.S.R., decided to remain in Nanjing instead of accompanying the Nationalists to Taiwan, just as his predecessor had stayed in occupied Shanghai instead of going to Chongqing.¹⁶⁷

In September 1949 a secret *pro memoria* from the British embassy in Lisbon asked the Portuguese government if they 'would be prepared in principle to support their [British government] policy of maintaining a foothold in China as long as possible'.¹⁶⁸ The Portuguese did manage to keep a foothold in China, even for longer than the British, but they did not follow their old ally when, the following month, the British embassy informed Portugal of its government's intention of recognizing the recently established People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) – which Britain recognized in January 1950.¹⁶⁹ Despite some in the diplomatic corps favouring it, the Portuguese government

¹⁶³ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M212, Fonseca to Caeiro da Mata, 19 July 1948.

¹⁶⁴ Pereira, *Accommodating Diversity*, p. 39.

¹⁶⁵ A. Caeiro, *Peregrinação Vermelha: O Longo Caminho até Pequim* [Red Pilgrimage: the Long Path to Beijing] (Lisbon, 2016), pp. 16–17. Gomes was chief of staff of the Portuguese military garrison in Macau.

¹⁶⁶ Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*, p. 114. A similar account is given in C. K. Mark, *Hong Kong and the Cold War: Anglo-American Relations 1949–1957* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 26–7.

¹⁶⁷ A.H.D., 2P,A48, M211, Fonseca to M.N.E., 29 Jan. 1949.

¹⁶⁸ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-2A2, cx. 422, *Pro memoria* from the British embassy in Lisbon, 1 Sept. 1949.

¹⁶⁹ A.N.T.T., A.O.S., NE-2A2, cx. 422, *Aide-mémoire* from the British embassy in Lisbon, 5 Oct. 1949. On Britain's recognition of the P.R.C., see D. C. Wolf, "'To secure a convenience': Britain recognizes China – 1950", *Journal of Contemporary History*, xviii (1983), 299–326; L. Xiang, 'The recognition controversy: Anglo-American relations in China, 1949', *Journal of Contemporary History*, xxvii (1992), 319–43; and C. K. Mark, *The Everyday Cold War: Britain and China, 1950–1972* (London, 2017), pp. 14–31.

preferred to wait and the country established official diplomatic relations with Beijing only in 1979, though unofficial contacts had been going on for decades via Macau.¹⁷⁰ These, too, were marked by pragmatic arrangements springing from the ambiguities of neutrality, this time neutrality in the civil war.

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This article has argued that Portugal's wartime neutrality exacerbated the ambiguities of its presence in China, impacting Sino-Portuguese relations after the conflict. Those ambiguities allowed leeway for political manoeuvring in the aftermath of the war when China sought to assert its sovereignty in a new world order. Portugal's *Estado Novo*, itself uncertain of its international status in an increasingly postcolonial world, also tried to act the sovereign by defending its record of neutrality – and, by association, its colonial rule in Macau.

Disagreements on issues left by the war were inextricably connected to China and Portugal's radically different views on colonialism in the late 1940s. Nationalist China emerged from the Second World War as a victorious, anti-imperialist world power that, after a century of foreign impositions, had regained control over most foreign-ruled territories in the country. Interactions with Portugal revealed the Nationalists' determination to assume their heightened post-war status but also the difficulties in doing so in the face of Portuguese efforts to retain colonial rule over Macau. Because of wartime neutrality the enclave had avoided the transfer of power that the war had brought about elsewhere. Tackling perceived unneutral actions that had occurred in the mainland and in Macau during the war, the Nationalists sought to deal with enemy property and alleged criminals and collaborators as a sovereign state. However, their efforts were marred by internal division and external prejudice. Sino-Portuguese relations reveal limitations in China's exercise of its new position, from difficulties in getting people extradited to the option of not retaking Macau immediately after the war, despite its return to Chinese rule being advocated by some as a way of dealing with its complicated wartime record. But Portugal's flexible neutrality had multiple beneficiaries, including those on the winners' side, so it could easily be portrayed as having been advantageous for China (for example, refugee relief) rather than a cause for condemnation (for example, collaboration with Japan); that is, it could be deployed to support Portuguese sovereignty claims rather than to confirm their illegitimacy. The hazy identities of several of those who had operated in and around the shadowlands of Macau during the war provided a pointed example of the difficulty of labelling people when exercising post-war justice, as in the case of a collaborationist gang leader who began as an agent for the resistance or that of a Portuguese Eurasian police officer who found himself on trial as a Chinese traitor. The wartime record of individuals and institutions was far more complicated than a clear-cut binary of resistance and collaboration, and this was particularly evident in in-between neutral spaces like Macau.

Although post-war Sino-Portuguese relations were haunted by the ghosts of wartime collaboration, their record was mixed. The Nationalists succeeded in negotiating with Portugal the abolition of extraterritoriality and in getting the infamous opium trade in Macau prohibited. These were Chinese anti-imperialist success stories that predated 1949. From 1947 more cordial bilateral relations began to take shape through personal connections, further stalling any radical moves to force the Portuguese to leave Macau. The civil war ultimately derailed a Nationalist-led decolonization of Macau. Even

¹⁷⁰ See e.g. Fernandes, *Confluência de Interesses*; and Pereira, *Accommodating Diversity*.

though Portuguese sovereignty over the territory continued to be challenged in different ways by the P.R.C. authorities after 1949, the territory officially returned to Chinese rule only in 1999: half a century after the Nationalist government left mainland China and twenty-five years after the collapse of the staunchly colonialist Estado Novo dictatorship.